

# Capitalising on mixed methods research: Design, examples, and practice

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25 June 2013

Presented at 2013 RAP Week

# Overview

- Development of mixed methods research
- Benefits and challenges of “mixing”
- Different models
- Good design
- Two examples
- How to report?
- Have a go!

## **Development of mixed methods research**

“The emergence of mixed methods as a third methodological movement in the social and behavioral sciences began during the 1980’s.” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 697)

## **Benefits of mixing:**

- To create an opportunity to learn both methods
- To offset weaknesses of quan and qual and draw on their strengths
  - To generalise with quan
  - To contextualise with qual
- To corroborate quan and qual findings
  - Quan justifies qual
  - Qual explains quan

## **Challenges of mixing:**

- To think through different worlds/worldviews
- To understand both quan and qual
- To spend more time and work harder

# Different models

- **Sequence**

- Concurrent approach

- Sequential approach

- ❖ Explanatory: first quan then qual

- e.g., first justify or falsify theoretical / conceptual framework quantitatively then obtain more detailed information qualitatively

- ❖ Exploratory: first qual then quan

- e.g., first explore or contextualise a framework qualitatively then develop an instrument to generalise the framework

- Embedded approach

- **Priority**

- Equal weight

- QUAN overweights qual

- QUAL overweights quan

## Implementation

- Identify a problem
- Review the literature
- Address the gap in the literature
- Clarify research questions
- Design the study
- Collect the data
- Analysis and interpret the data
- Report and evaluate the study



## Research questions and design

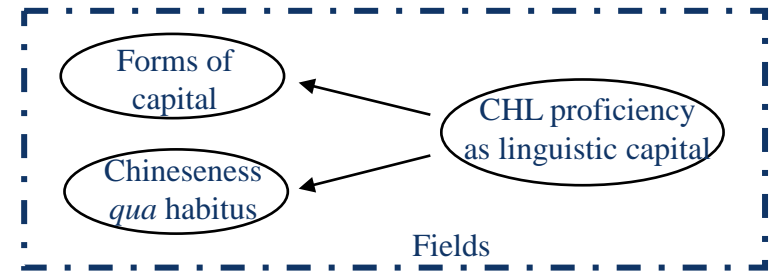
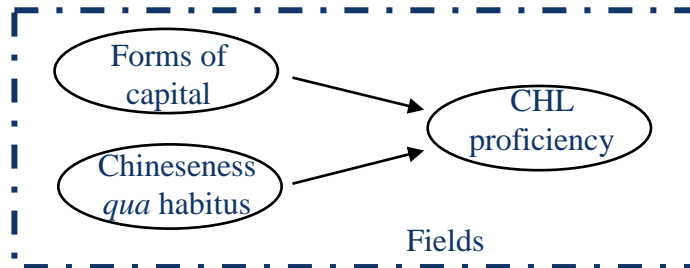
- Research questions function to shape research design.
- Research design function to serve the investigation of research questions.
- When one type of research is not enough to address the research problem or answer the research questions (Complement).
- When quantitative and qualitative data together provide a better understanding of the research problem than either type by itself (Enrichment).

# Example 1: How do Chinese Australians capitalise on resources (capital) and negotiate their Chineseness (habitus) through learning Chinese as a Heritage Language (practice) in Australia and beyond (fields)?

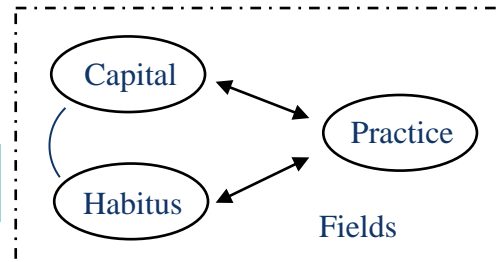
**Quan question:** Is CHL proficiency of young Chinese Australian adults influenced by their investment of capital, the strength of their habitus of ‘Chineseness’, or both?

Theoretical framework (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 101):  
“[(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice”

**Qual question:** How do young Chinese Australian adults understand their CHL learning in relation to (potential) profits produced by this linguistic capital in given fields?



**Initial quan with priority**



**Subsequent qual as a complement**

## **Example 2: Family support for Chinese Heritage Language learning (CHL)**

### **Literature review:**

There is emerging a rich body of thought about individual, familial and societal dynamics of CHLL in Anglophone western countries and bilingual Canada.



There is a dearth of quantitative evidence on the relationship between family support and CHL proficiency. The survey sub-study was designed to provide quantitative evidence on this under-researched topic.

Transitions from pleasure to resistance to commitment remain under-researched. The interview sub-study contributed to this field of research by extending a Bourdieusian perspective to the transition from CHL resistance to commitment – a phenomenon we term ‘habitus realisation’.



**Quan question:** Does family support and young Chinese Australians’ CHL proficiency have a significant correlation?

**Qual question:** What are the nature and dynamics of family support?

**A concurrent approach with qual overweighting quan**



# How do you report mixed methods studies?

Work with the conventions for reporting *both* statistical and qualitative analyses

## Challenges

- Mastering 2 trades
- Weaving the 2 components together well
- Running out of words
- Making the study accessible to a wider audience

## Have a go!

- Would you like to share the mixed methods studies that you have designed?
- Would you like to design a mixed methods study?
- An empirical mixed methods study from the literature: How would *you* design it?

# The scenario – 1

- **The social problem:** the cost of preventative health care for the most rapidly growing demographic – the oldest old (85yrs+)
- **The research problem:** how do relationships with PHPs affect the health care of the healthy and independent living oldest old?
- **The theoretical model:** patient-by-treatment-context interactive model proposes that the relationship between patient characteristic (e.g., personality, beliefs) and patient adherence (e.g., preventative cares) is moderated by the treatment context (e.g., PHP behaviour and characteristics).

# The scenario – 2

- **The literature review:** “There is a lack of research examining certain oldest olds’ individual characteristics that are known to be associated with health care and health providers. Thus the current study ... [will examine] the relationships between Locus of Control, resilience, and self-efficacy to participants’ opinions of their PHP.” (p. 4)
- **Participants:** 35 independent living oldest old
- **Design and data production and analysis procedures:** over to you...

## References

Bourdieu, P. (1989). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgment of taste*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2003). *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stadtlander, L. M., Giles, M. J., Sickel, A. E., Brooks, E., Brown, C., Cormell, M., . . . Stoneking, S. (2013). Independent Living Oldest Old and Their Primary Health Provider: A Mixed Method Examination of the Influence of Patient Personality Characteristics. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*. doi: 10.1177/0733464813482182